

Duke University

Report from the First Year

It's summer on the Duke campus, hot and quiet; we are in that lull before the adolescent campers start arriving in droves carrying lacrosse sticks, basketballs, and soccer balls. Although the campers live in their own self-contained world, their arrival reminds us that the class of 2009 is not too far behind. We are already well into our recruiting cycle for this class, having staffed tables at Blue Devil Days in April and now preparing to mail our booklet to all entering women. The current Baldwin Scholars express great excitement about recruiting the next class; they claim we will exceed our total of 78 applicants (10% of the first year women) from last fall. Although we appreciate their enthusiasm, we are a bit wary; it was hard enough to turn away 60 women and will be even harder if we have to turn away many more.

On the positive side, their enthusiasm for recruiting speaks to the wonderful experience they have had in the program thus far. Emily, Colleen and I have reflected on how things went in our inaugural year, and have talked with the students individually and as a group. We all agree that the year went nearly flawlessly. Part of that has to do with the program's design; we created a program that suits Duke well and meets an important need. Part of it has to do with the generous start-up resources provided by Presidents Keohane and Brodhead, which allowed us to market effectively and create an attractive and welcoming physical space. Most of it has to do with the talent and enthusiasm of our inaugural class, and with the way they came

together as classmates and friends. To paraphrase Sally Field, they really *liked* one another and their individual connections to women very different from themselves opened new horizons.

For most of them, interpersonal connections were forged through the seminar. We met twice a week in the evening in the Baldwin Scholars classroom – a lovely space in the East Duke Building that used to be Keith Brodie's office. He kindly left us his conference table and chairs, and we supplemented that seating with a large sectional sofa and a colorful rug. The students sprawled comfortably on the sofa or around the table, their ease with one another palpable from the start.

I had the pleasure of teaching the first third of the course; we focused on women's autobiography, beginning with Virginia Woolf's famous essay *A Room of One's Own*. I chose that essay with trepidation because I love it so much; had the students not liked it, or not had much to say about it, I knew I would be disappointed.

I need not have worried. The women read the assignment, thought about it, and were eager to share their opinions with me and with one another. Many loved the essay as much as I do, appreciating the delicious irony of Woolf's language. Others thought she hasn't gotten it right – genius can thrive under any circumstance, can't it?

The joy of that class, and all the ones that followed, was the students' absolute engagement.

Duke has wonderful students and I've certainly taught classes that I've adored. Every so often a class catches fire and you run just to keep up, but those transcendent moments don't happen more than a few times a semester.

Usually it's a lot of work to stand up there and teach; students aren't necessarily indifferent, but they may well be sleepy, under-prepared, or confused. The Baldwin Scholars were absolutely present, awake, and with me, and the two teachers who succeeded me in the seminar concurred. It was an extraordinary class.

Come this fall, we will find out what it's like to have twice as many Baldwin Scholars. We look forward to our pioneers moving over to Crowell Quad as we welcome the new class. We'll keep you posted on their progress and we hope you will come see us when you visit Duke.

Donna Lisker, Ph.D.
Co-Director

Meet Alison Perlberg, a Baldwin Scholar...



Alison Perlberg
Class of 2008

I came to Duke from the Westminster Schools in Atlanta, GA where I received the Vanderbilt Book Award, given to the student with the greatest ability to communicate significant or creative ideas in writing. I enjoyed a number of activities at Westminster, from serving as Copy Editor of the student newspaper to acting, directing, and singing in school productions. I was also chosen to participate in the Iowa Young Writers' Studio held at the University of Iowa.

Here at Duke University, I am a member of Lady Blue (an all female a cappella group) and the Alpha Omicron Pi sorority. First semester, I completed the

Evolution and Humankind FOCUS program. I served as a Peer Educator for SHARP (Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention) and also tutored in local Durham public schools. This summer, I am participating in the Duke-Durham Scholars Program, where I will plan and implement academic and recreational activities for children in Durham.

I am interested in English, cultural anthropology, and psychology, and am considering a career in education.

Mentoring x 2!

The Giles Mentors, our group of upperclass women involved with the Baldwin Scholars program, planned a special dinner for the Baldwin Scholars in April. The purpose of the dinner was for the upperclass women to introduce THEIR campus mentors to the first-year women.

Jean O'Barr, University Distinguished Service Professor and founding director of Women's Studies, gave an inspiring keynote about mentoring. Several themes wove through her stories and these themes bear repeating:

Mentoring is about building relationships of trust that last over time.

Mentoring requires the sharing of power rather than the hoarding of power.

Mentoring is a dynamic process not a one-time event.

Mentoring requires praise as well as critique on the part of each person.

Mentoring is a key part of leadership.

Mentoring requires self-esteem and a reflective stance toward the world
around us.

Mentoring is connecting through everyday, ordinary acts that bring people
into relationships and that benefit both partners.

And most importantly, mentoring rewards everyone who is involved in
imagining and creating change.



Giles Mentor Mel Baars (right) with her mentor Sue Wasiolek, Dean of Students



Baldwin Scholar Rachel McLaughlin (left) with Giles Mentor Megan O'Flynn and Betsy Alden, Kenan Institute for Ethics

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down

As part of the Baldwin Scholars seminar, the students were assigned The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down by Anne Fadiman.

The book, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, traces the dramatic conflicts that arose between a refugee family from Laos and their American doctors over the care of their seriously ill child.

Fadiman was invited to Duke to give campus lectures at the University and at the Medical Center.

She explored the cross-cultural experience of reporting and writing The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures and discussed the challenges she faced during her eight years of immersion in Hmong culture. She also had a private reception with the Baldwin Scholars.

Anne Fadiman's visit to Duke University was co-sponsored by the following organizations:

- Asian Students Association
- Baldwin Scholars
- Center for the Study of Medical Ethics and Humanities
- Collegiate Athlete Pre-Medical Experience (CAPE)
- Duke University Union
- FOCUS
- New Beginnings
- Office of the President
- Residence Life and Housing Services

DC Women's Forum Luncheon



Baldwin Scholar Laura Welch (center) with parents Martin and Patricia Davidson Welch

Baldwin Scholars Laura Welch, Regan Bosch and Megan Braley were featured at a May luncheon hosted by the DC Women's Forum, a Duke alumnae group. Donna Lisker presented an overview of the Women's Initiative research and response, which was followed by a panel discussion with the students about their first-year experience and the Baldwin Scholars program.

After the formal program ended, Laura was so interested in using her networking skills that we are not sure her dad, Judge Martin Welch, made it back in time for his 3p.m. meeting!

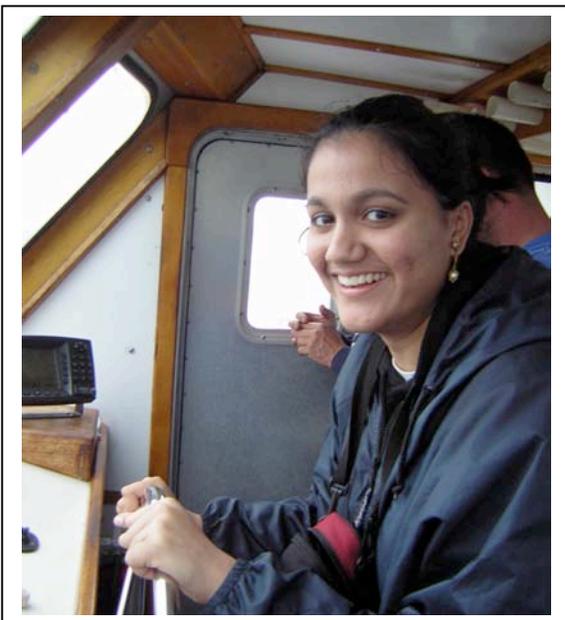
Field trip to the Duke Marine Lab

The Baldwin Scholars ventured to the Duke Marine Lab in Beaufort, NC, led by geology professor and Baldwin Scholars co-Director Emily Klein and Duke Marine Consortium Director Bruce Corliss. Many of the scheduled outdoor science activities had to be cancelled because of torrential rains...but the students had fun regardless!



(left to right) Baldwin Scholars
Vanja Vlahovic, Andrea
Dinamarco, Pallavi Kansal,
Alison Perlberg, Claire
Lauterbach, Sarah Gordon, and
Aislinn Affinito

Baldwin Scholar Nathalie
Basile with a live one!



Baldwin Scholar Anita
Pai steering the research
vessel *Susan Hudson*.

2004-2005 Events co-sponsored by the Baldwin Scholars Program

Though only 18 women per class can be selected as Baldwin Scholars, we are committed to sharing the benefits of the program more widely across campus. To that end, the Baldwin Scholars program contributed to the following campus events:

- Women as Leaders conference
- Sexuality and Citizenship lecture series
- Sexual Assault Prevention Week
- Dating Violence Prevention Week
- Step Sisters performance
- Public Speaking workshop by consultant Joy Javits
- Jamie Lynn DiScala lecture
- Vagina Monologues performance
- Adrienne Rich lecture (Blackburn Literary Festival)
- Amy Tan lecture
- Laura Flanders lecture



Baldwin Scholar Meng Zhou (left) with author Amy Tan

Thanks to our Donors!

When **Nannerl O. Keohane** authorized the creation of the Baldwin Scholars in 2004, she arranged for operating funds sufficient to support the program through 2008. About half of those funds come from the office of **President Richard Brodhead**; the balance comes from a generous grant provided by the **Duke Endowment**.

In order to continue the Baldwin Scholars beyond 2008, we will be working to raise a program endowment. We offer our sincere thanks to the following donors for their gifts; we appreciate their leadership and their belief in all that our Scholars can become.

Alice Appen '64

Miriam Cameron '78

The Kresge Foundation

Wendy Marantz Levine '95

Leo and Gertrude Marantz Family Foundation

Laura Ellen Muglia '76 and Robert Muglia

Margaret Taylor Smith '47

If you are interested in making a gift to the Baldwin Scholars, please contact Donna Lisker at dlisker@duke.edu. Gifts can be targeted toward any area of the program.